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SBF FLEET

MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC & PRIVATE PUPIL TRANSPORTATION FLEETS

NAPT Convention Highlights

- Update On Federal Rules For Disabled
- NHTSA Rulemaking Creates Controversy
- State Directors Form Supplier Group
- Tier-Routing Improves Bus Efficiency

Full Inclusion For Disabled

Guide To Spec'ing School Buses

SBF's 1992 Pull-Out Calendar

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Vol. 37 No. 7

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JESSE H. NEAL CERTIFICATE, 1985

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SBF's Top-100 Fleet Survey

Survey finds pupil population growth and special education affect new bus purchases. Increase shown in contractor fleets.

By Neil V. Young

According to the seventh annual **SCHOOL BUS FLEET** Top-100 Survey, the New York City Board of Education again has the largest school bus fleet of any school district in the nation.

It has 3,285 buses, up 4 buses from last year. Los Angeles Unified School District is the second largest, with 2,810 buses, while close competitor Chicago found itself again in third place with 2,746 buses.

As for contractors, the king of the road last year, Laidlaw Transit Inc., based in Burlington, ON, still holds the number one spot this year. However, Laidlaw has cut its fleet size by 1,702 buses. That brings the combined figures for its U.S. and Canadian fleets to 19,719. Its nearest competitor, Mayflower Contract Services, has 7,558 buses. Ryder Student Transportation is in third place with 6,867 buses.

National School Bus Service in Palatine, IL, increased its fleet size by 177 buses. National recently acquired company's that provide school and paratransit transportation service in New Jersey, Minneapolis and Pittsburgh.

Twenty-six contractors are listed in this year's survey. Overall, contractor fleet size is up, but it isn't because of new vehicle acquisitions. The increase in buses is most often the result of acquiring other bus companies.

School Services and Leasing in Edwardsville, KS, has 271 more buses than last year. According to the company's general manager, Jerry Herbert, that was largely due to the acquisition of contracts in the nearby Wichita area.

Vancom of South Holland, IL, expanded its fleet by 340, most of that due to a single company acquisition, according to President Lynn Deason.

Of the districts that responded, 32 percent do not plan to purchase new bus models in 1992. Of the 68 percent that do plan to purchase or have new buses on order, many are replacing older models scheduled for retirement.

The top 74 districts responding to our survey plan to purchase 1,591 large buses for the 1991-92 school year. They plan to purchase 141 small school buses and 61 multi-purpose vehicles (MPVs).

The designation MPV is any vehicle that carries fewer than 10 passengers, including the driver, that cannot be certified as a school bus and isn't painted yellow. That designation was adopted at the 10th National Standards Conference in 1985.

Because some school districts and private contractors were confused about the definition of MPV vehicles, which on submitted surveys included everything from a maintenance truck to vans that transport students to and from school, some bus fleet totals include MPV's. Those are indicated on the chart with an asterisk.

Schedules staggered

School districts are often caught in a bind between pupil population growth and a shortfall of funding. In many cases that means staggering school times to get the most use out of buses.

Chicago Public Schools, which has the nation's third largest district fleet, has become "leaner and meaner," according to Dr. Robert Johnson, the district's director of transportation. "Staggering school times to better suit our schedules has allowed us to cover more routes with fewer buses," says Johnson. "Since we are 100-percent contracted, it is much easier to trim our fleet size."

The Los Angeles Unified School District reports difficulties in responding to changing demands from year to year. "There is a great deal in the way of population shifts in our area," says Randy Altenberg, deputy director of the transportation branch. "As the year goes on, more children show up and we need to increase our fleet to transport children out of the crowded schools. What may be the case one year may be totally different the next."

Special education has affected new bus purchases as well, and accounts for a number of the small bus purchases. Some pupil transportation managers are citing nationwide early intervention programs for infants and toddlers and other special education programs as the reasons. "We anticipated the need for special education buses," says Matt Wallace of the Clark County School District in Las Vegas, NV. "So we allocated funds to purchase 50 of them."

Particularly affected are states with a rapid pupil population growth rate. "We opened up eight new schools last year and seven this year," says Stan McCall, director of operations for the school district of Broward County in Fort Lauderdale, FL. "We currently have 56 new buses routed and another 104 on order." A local bond measure enabled the county to fund some of the new buses as state funding to the county was cut significantly.

Largest 100 School Bus Fleets

RANK	SCHOOL DISTRICT, CITY	No. Large Buses	No. Small Buses	Lifts Large Buses	Lifts Small Buses	Pupils Daily	Fleet '91	Fleet '90	+/- '90	No. Under Contract
1	New York City Public Schools New York City, NY	1963	1322	0	267	140,000	3285	3244	+41	3142
2	LA Unified School District Los Angeles, CA	2451	359	309	0	79,520	2810	2941	-131	1251
3	Chicago Public Schools Chicago, IL	965	1781	180	28	55,366	2746	3000	-254	2746
4	Milwaukee Public Schools Milwaukee, WI	1100	500	0	70	48,500	1600	1600	0	1600
5	Fairfax County Public Schools Alexandria, VA	1312	0	181	0	91,771	1312	1301	+11	0
6	Dade County Public Schools Miami, FL	1130	5	347	5	60,000	1135	1036	+99	60
7	School District of Philadelphia Philadelphia, PA	1016	49	136	0	60,289	1065	913	+152	364
8	Prince George's County Public Schools Upper Marlboro, MD	1026	0	71	0	76,187	1026	1023	+3	3
9	Houston ISD Houston, TX	703	296	14	98	34,000	999	959	+40	0
10	Hillsborough County School District Tampa, FL	940	14	118	10	68,042	954	928	+26	0
11	Montgomery County Public Schools Rockville, MD	874	71	99	3	70,000	945	906	+39	11
12	Jefferson County School District Louisville, KY	854	62	74	0	64,000	916	907	+9	195
13	Orange County Public Schools Orlando, FL	833	0	131	0	55,000	833	836	-3	0
14	Duval County School District Jacksonville, FL	757	73	4	120	52,293	830	771	+59	830
15	Hawaii Department of Education Honolulu, HI	534	243	1	95	38,500	791	812	-21	777
16	Dekalb County Public Schools Tucker, GA	775	0	42	0	58,000	775	695	+80	0
17	Gwinnett County Public Schools Lawrenceville, GA	589	149	29	31	61,992	738	639	+48	0
18	Charlotte-Mecklenberg School District Charlotte, NC	715	5	39	1	51,280	720	724	-4	0
19	Cobb County School District Marietta, GA	547	171	0	45	54,000	718	718	0	0
20	The School Board of Broward County Ft. Lauderdale, FL	702	12	98	6	56,000	714	601	+113	0
21	East Baton Rouge Parish School Board Baton Rouge, LA	597	100	0	21	46,500	697	681	+16	0
22	Detroit Public School District Detroit, MI	525	150	0	65	35,000	675	685	-10	150
23	Baltimore County Public Schools Baltimore, MD	419	244	0	144	52,000	663	737	-74	41
24	Boston Public School District Boston, MA	232	423	0	33	28,000	655	640	+15	0
25	Columbus Public Schools Columbus, OH	650	0	23	0	36,000	650	661	-11	106
26	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education (Voluntary Desegregation) St. Louis, MO	516	121	1	3	15,543	637	613	+24	637

* Fleet total includes MPV's.

Largest 100 School Bus Fleets

RANK	SCHOOL DISTRICT, CITY	No. Large Buses	No. Small Buses	Lifts Large Buses	Lifts Small Buses	Pupils Daily	Fleet '91	Fleet '90	+/- '90	No. Under Contract
27	Minneapolis Public Schools Minneapolis, MN	484	128	10	25	42,885	612	560	+52	442
28	Clark County School District Las Vegas, NV	406	183	56	39	43,136	589	510	+79	0
29	San Diego Unified School District San Diego, CA	455	122	108	0	19,506	577	608	-31	286
30	Palm Beach District Schools Palm Beach, FL	576	0	97	0	55,000	576	493	+83	0
31	Cleveland City Schools Cleveland, OH	570	0	18	0	30,000	570	544	+34	0
32	Omaha Public Schools Omaha, NE	197	343	0	16	15,000	540*	475	+65	197
33	Virginia Beach City Public Schools Virginia Beach, VA	535	1	67	1	60,000	536	531	+5	0
34	Austin ISD Austin,TX	318	167	6	30	25,000	485	471	+14	0
35	Prince William County Public Schools Bristol, VA	353	127	0	45	30,000	480	481	-1	0
36	Buffalo Public School District Buffalo, NY	325	99	15	5	26,136	471*	384	+87	452
37	Caddo Parish School Board Shreveport, LA	469	0	27	0	28,467	469	479	-10	0
38	Metro Nashville Public Schools Nashville, TN	345	115	0	20	46,469	460	460	0	0
39	School District of Lee County Ft. Myers, FL	379	81	60	2	30,000	460	453	+7	0
40	School Board of Brevard County Rockledge, FL	450	0	0	0	25,786	450	450	0	0
41	Albuquerque Public Schools Albuquerque, NM	300	120	0	30	33,000	420	420	0	420
42	Portland Public Schools Portland, OR	228	187	5	40	14,000	415	423	-8	313
43	Cypress-Fairbanks ISD Houston, TX	328	50	34	0	29,437	378	416	-38	0
44	Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools Winston Salem, NC	364	0	21	0	25,000	364	414	-50	0
45	Knox County Board of Education Knoxville, TN	274	79	0	27	33,500	353	317	+36	353
46	Ft. Worth ISD Ft. Worth, TX	250	100	33	20	16,050	350	332	+18	0
47	Polk District Schools Bartow, FL	332	13	54	1	35,468	345	444	-99	0
48	Seattle Public Schools Seattle, WA	244	92	26	0	22,000	336	388	-52	336
49	Jefferson Parish Public Schools Marrero, LA	331	1	14	1	45,000	332	333	-1	332
50	Howard County Board of Education Ellicott City, MD	331	0	80	0	26,000	331	--	--	331
51	Pasco County Board of Education Port Richey, FL	315	0	77	0	25,000	315	305	+12	0
52	St. Paul Public Schools St. Paul, MN	303	6	18	2	32,353	309	319	-10	301

* Fleet total includes MPV's

Largest 100 School Bus Fleets

RANK	SCHOOL DISTRICT, CITY	No. Large Buses	No. Small Buses	Lifts Large Buses	Lifts Small Buses	Pupils Daily	Fleet '91	Fleet '90	+/- '90	No. Under Contract
53	Special School District of St. Louis St. Louis, MO	271	36	161	3	3300	307	292	+15	0
54	Northside Independant School District San Antonio, TX	292	0	25	0	21,000	292	282	+10	0
55	Sarasota District Schools Sarasota, FL	291	0	0	0	16,000	291	268	+23	0
56	Anchorage School District Anchorage, AK	265	25	35	6	18,000	290	311	-21	183
57	Oklahoma City Public Schools Oklahoma City, OK	228	62	17	0	16,600	290	285	+5	0
58	Seminole County Schools Winter Springs, FL	280	9	34	0	26,950	289	305	-16	0
59	Memphis Public Schools Memphis, TN	139	150	0	70	19,000	289	255	+34	0
60	Jefferson County Public Schools Lakewood, CO	271	17	47	3	27,000	288	295	-7	0
61	Leon District Schools Tallahassee, FL	288	0	52	0	15,858	288	276	+12	0
62	Rockford Public Schools Rockford, IL	181	101	0	4	15,650	282	286	-4	101
63	Tucson Unified School District Tucson, AZ	200	75	5	70	16,000	275	311	-36	0
64	St. Lucie District School Board Ft. Pierce, FL	265	5	27	0	15,000	270	292	-22	0
65	Mesa Unified Schools Mesa, AZ	144	97	0	42	16,601	241	220	+21	0
66	Long Beach Unified School District Long Beach, CA	153	88	0	14	20,000	241	231	+10	216
67	School Board of Alachua County Gainesville, FL	194	18	16	18	14,222	212	208	+4	0
68	Washoe County School District Sparks, NV	188	20	24	9	14,200	208	--	--	0
69	Ector County ISD Odessa, TX	201	4	7	0	8500	205	--	--	0
70	Citrus County School Board Inverness, FL	199	1	10	0	8500	200	--	--	0
71	Clay District Schools Green Cove Springs, FL	151	44	0	36	12,090	195	--	--	0
72	Manatee District School Board Bradenton, FL	182	14	22	1	13,000	196	--	--	0
73	Collier County Public Schools Naples, FL	160	30	2	13	10,000	190	--	--	0
74	Independent School District #196 Rosemount, MN	166	5	11	0	18,000	177*	--	--	0

* Fleet total includes MPV's.

Largest 100 School Bus Fleets

RANK	CONTRACTOR, CITY	No. Large Buses	No. Small Buses	Lifts Large Buses	Lifts Small Buses	Pupils Daily	Fleet '91	Fleet '90	+/- '90
1	Laidlaw Transit, Ltd. Burlington, ON	17,537	2182	0	0	957,529	19,719	21,421	-1702
2	Mayflower Contract Services Overland Park, KS	5228	2330	313	500	400,000	7558	7650	-92
3	Ryder Student Transportation Miami, FL	5905	839	181	336	400,000	6867*	7044	-177
4	National School Bus Service Palatine, IL	2229	653	21	49	300,000	3221*	3044	+177
5	Vancom Inc. South Holland, IL	2021	584	89	58	239,000	2730*	2390	+340
6	Durham Transportation, Inc. Rosemead, CA	1330	1148	123	238	213,350	2478	2226	+252
7	Charterways Transportation London, ON	1578	662	106	3	83,778	2240	1497	+743
8	Atlantic Express Staten Island, NY	1212	273	82	72	70,000	1485	1496	-11
9	School Services & Leasing Shawnee, KS	808	435	5	85	90,700	1243	972	+271
10	Cook-Illinois Corp. Oak Forest, IL	750	450	7	30	75,000	1200	1200	0
11	ICBM/Transcom Mattapan, MA	647	400	0	400	33,000	1047	1000	+47
12	Mark IV Charter Lines/Embree Buses, Inc. Gardena, CA	590	235	40	60	24,500	825	730	+95
13	Stock Transportation Group, Ltd. Richmond Hill, ON	470	240	1	55	28,400	710	668	+42
14	Septran, Inc. Bloomington, MN	160	530	10	40	20,000	690	665	+25
15	Towne Bus Corp./WE Transport, Inc. Hicksville, NY	253	382	3	76	35,000	635	695	-60
16	George Krapf Jr. and Sons, Inc. Glenmoore, PA	349	123	17	4	39,414	472	463	+9
17	Briggs Bus Lines Edmonton, AB	315	125	6	45	17,000	440	420	+20
18	School Bus Services, Inc. Gresham, OR	330	70	1	50	11,200	400	--	--
19	Logan Bus Co. Ozone Park, NY	140	210	0	0	10,000	350	350	0
20	Reliable Bus Co. Chicago, IL	225	100	10	30	6000	325	305	+20
21	Riteway Bus Service Richfield, WI	150	125	0	20	15,000	275	250	+25
22	Medicine Lake Bus Co. St. Paul, MN	209	56	8	15	14,570	265	332	-67
23	Action Transit Enterprises, Inc. Pittsburgh, PA	150	100	0	10	10,000	250	215	+35
24	Dean Transportation, Inc. Lansing, MI	175	75	170	86	3100	250	200	+50
25	Kobussen Buses, Ltd. Kaukauna, WI	127	28	10	12	7000	155	--	--
26	Beck Bus Transportation Corp., Mt. Vernon, IL	119	6	4	0	7000	125	--	--

* Fleet total includes MPV's.